

Message Text

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FOR POLADS

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT GW
SUBJ: PUBLIC RELATIONS AND THE TERRORIST TRIAL

REF: STUTTGART 1033

1. SUMMARY: BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG JUSTICE AUTHORITIES REFUTE
POINT BY POINT SENSATIONAL "OBSERVER" ARTICLE AND PLANNED
LOCAL EXPOSE OF ALLEGED EVIDENCE THAT DEATH OF KEY DEFENDANT
ULRIKE MEINHOF WAS NOT SUICIDE BUT RAPE AND MURDER IN HER
CELL. THIS IMMEDIATE OFFICIAL RESPONSE AND OTHER TENTATIVE
EVIDENCE MIGHT INDICATION OF STUDIED LOW-
KEY APPROACH TO PUBLIC RELATIONS AS END OF TRIAL APPROACHES.
MEANWHILE FORMER LEADING DEFENSE ATTORNEY CROISSANT WAS
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RELEASED ON DM 80,000 BAIL. END SUMMARY.

2. AS BAADER-MEINHOF TRIAL APPROACHES ITS CONCLUSION, PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECTS APPEAR TO BE ASSUMING INCREASING IMPORTANCE. IN THE PRESS ON AUGUST 19 AND ON TV THE PRECEDING EVENING BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG JUSTICE MINISTER BENDER AND OTHER LEGAL AUTHORITIES REJECTED POINT BY POINT AN ACCUSATION PUBLISHED IN THE SUNDAY "OBSERVER" IN LONDON ON AUGUST 15. THIS PREEMPTORY OFFICIAL REACTION WAS PROBABLY ALSO TAKEN IN ANTICIPATION OF THE FACT THAT ON AUGUST 26 A GROUP OF LAWYERS, WRITERS AND DOCTORS PLAN TO REPEAT THE "OBSERVER'S" REPORT AND CHARGE PUBLICLY THAT ULRIKE MEINHOF DID NOT COMMIT SUICIDE, BUT WAS RAPED AND AFTERWARDS KILLED IN HER CELL.

3. THE "OBSERVER" INCIDENT AND PLANNED AUGUST 26 "EXPOSE", WHICH WILL INCLUDE NUMBER OF FOREIGNERS, OCCUR INCIDENTALLY ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH VISIT TO CONGEN BY AN AMERICAN PROFESSOR REFERRED TO IN REFTEL WHO INDICATED HE WAS FURIOUS OVER TREATMENT BY MINOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES WHEN HE SOUGHT TO OBTAIN BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON TRIAL WHILE IN STAMMHEIM. AS INDICATED IN REFTEL PROFESSOR WAS ANYTHING BUT LEFTIST RADICAL. HE ASSERTED THAT, IF WE HAD NOT MOLLIFIED HIM AND PROVIDED CAREFUL EXPLANATION RE SENSITIVE STATE OF TRIAL, HE WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE DONE "UGLY GERMAN" PIECE FOR EDUCATION TV IN SAN FRANCISCO.

4. DURING AN INCIDENTAL CALL BY THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL AT THE CONSULATE GENERAL ON THE FOLLOWING DAY GENERAL SUBJECT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS CAME UP AND HE INDICATED JUSTICE AUTHORITIES APPRECIATE THAT SOMETHING MUST BE DONE TO PROVIDE OBJECTIVE INFORMATION FOR USE OF IMPARTIAL REPORTERS AND THOSE NOT A PART OF RADICAL/LEFTIST EFFORT TO DISCREDIT MANAGEMENT OF TRIAL.

5. MEANWHILE, FORMER LEADING DEFENSE ATTORNEY CROISSANT, WHO WAS THE MASTERMIND OF THE PROPAGANDA EFFORT OF THE BAADER-MEINHOF GROUP (HUNGER STRIKE, JEAN-PAUL SARTRE VISIT, ETC.) WAS RELEASED AUGUST 19 ON DM 80,000 BAIL, AFTER HAVING BEEN IMPRISONED SINCE JULY 19. CROISSANT HAD BEEN ARRESTED TWICE WITHIN THE PAST 13 MONTHS FOR ALLEGED SUPPORT OF A CRIMINAL ORGANIZATION. ON SAME DAY, A KARLSRUHE COURT, WITHOUT GIVING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REASONS, POSTPONED ANOTHER TRIAL IN WHICH CROISSANT WAS CHARGED WITH SLANDERING THREE JUDGES OF THE FEDERAL PENAL COURT.

6. COMMENT: BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG AUTHORITIES, WHO ARE AWARE THAT ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVES OF BAADER-MEINHOF DEFENSE IS TO GAIN PUBLIC SYMPATHY AND EMBELLISH IMAGE OF "UGLY GERMAN", HAVE BEEN STUNG A NUMBER OF TIMES BY SENSATIONAL

OR NOT-IMPARTIAL PRESS HERE (DER SPIEGEL) AND ABROAD (LE MONDE, SUNDAY TIMES AND OBSERVER). FOR MOST PART GOVERNMENT'S PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORT HAS BEEN LIMITED TO OCCASIONAL PRESS RELEASES ON CHARGES AND OFFICIAL COURT RULINGS, ISSUED AT OBERLANDESGERICHT. MOREOVER, LOCAL PRESS AND TV ON THEIR OWN ACCORD HAVE STUDIOUSLY DEEMPHASIZED TRIAL IN REPORTING IN ORDER TO AVOID PLAYING DEFENSE'S GAME. THIS HAS HAD OVERALL POSITIVE EFFECT ON LOCAL PUBLIC IMAGE OF TRIAL AND IN PREVENTING IGNITION OF SPARKS AT TRIAL. HOWEVER, LOW KEY POLICY OCCASIONALLY BACKFIRES AS IN CASE OF AFOREMENTIONED CALIFORNIA PROFESSOR AND DORNBERG ARTICLE IN JULY 8, 1975 HERALD TRIBUNE. AUTHORITIES MIGHT NOW BE AWARE OF NECESSITY DURING CLOSING DAYS OF TRIAL TO BE IN A POSITION TO COPE WITH BOTH AGGRESSIVE PUBLIC RELATIONS ONSLAUGHT AND TO PROVIDE THE FACTS TO OBJECTIVE REPORTERS. HOWEVER, THE RELEASE OF CROISANT ALMOST CERTAINLY WILL MAKE THE TASK OF PUBLIC RELATIONS EVEN MORE CHALLENGING FOR THE COURT. JENKINS

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